day. The reverend gentleman also stated that the 500*l.* above-referred to, as agreed to be placed at the disposal of the Dean and Chapter by the ecclesiastical commissioners, on the part of those prebendal stalls the revenues of which were under their control, had been so contributed, and had been received by the restoration committee, as had also the arrears of subscriptions, with the exception only of a third instalment upon one of them.

In the speech of the Rev. Mr. Harcourt on the same occasion, the meeting was informed that those intentions of the Dean and Chapter already detailed, and for carrying out which the sanction of Parliament was necessary, had been effected: 6,000*l.* had been placed at the disposal of the restoration committee for the repair of those parts of the minster which were in a dangerous state, and to that sum 4,000*l.* were ready to be added towards completing the restoration of the nave should it be required; but it was to be borne in mind, "that all which they might be called upon to supply towards the repair caused by the late fire, would be so much money abstracted from the fund for the substantial and necessary repairs of the building."

After many excellent addresses, evincing throughout the devotion which inspired the inhabitants of this great county for their cathedral, the chairman of the restoration committee proceeded to read the list of additional sums which had been subscribed, and which, with those up to October 29th, amounted to 5,757*l.* 10*s.*, a sum which, considering the large amount of previous contributions, must be considered handsome, but which was still inadequate to the completion of the desired reparations."

Since the meeting last referred to, much has been done in pursuance of the reports of the architect; the restoration of the nave and south-west tower has been completed; the roof of south aisle reconstructed with iron castings in lieu of timber trusses, and covered with lead; the vaulting and repairs of masonry and paving have been finished, and the whole cleaned down, and handsome new doors with elaborate tracery and ornamental hinges hung to central and south doorways in west front, in lieu of those destroyed, which if like that to north tower, were of a very plain description; a new door is likewise in preparation for the latter, like the south one; a new roof with iron trusses and covered with copper has also been constructed over the north transept. While the works in nave were in progress, the great arches at its east end were bricked up, in order to prevent interruption to the service, and to confine the noise and dust of the operations from extending eastward: when the restoration, and repairs in the west were finished, these temporary walls were taken down. On Friday, the 5th of July, 1844, the nave was partially opened to the public, and on the Sunday following, the opening was formalized by the presence and preaching of the very rev. the Dean.

On the 26th of December, 1843, Dr. Beckwith, physician of York, died, bequeathing his ample fortune in aid of the various charities and public institutions; amongst the bequests being one of 5,000*l.* to the Dean and Chapter for a new peal of bells, the remainder of the sum to be applied in repairing the Chapter-house. In accordance with the intention of the munificent testator, the restoration committee commissioned the eminent bell-founder, Mears, of Whitechapel (now succeeded by his sons C. and G. Mears), to complete a peal of twelve musical bells, that number being two more than the old peal consisted of. The new or Beckwith peal first burst upon the delighted ears of the inhabitants on the 11th of July, 1844; and though heard under the several disadvantages of the ringers being out of practice, and unused to a peal of twelve; the bells not having yet adjusted themselves to their bearings; the ropes having to stretch; the clappers to accommodate themselves to the sides of the bells, which always want some sharp practice to consolidate and bring them into perfect tune, and the bells yet to attune themselves into perfect harmony with each other, their tones were pronounced to be of fine quality. Another supposed disadvantage that was talked about was the steepness of the new slate louvres in the belfry windows, which it was thought prevented the free passage of the sound; upon inquiry, however, it appears that no alteration was made in their pitch. Respecting these louvres it may be mentioned, that an effect has been produced which was no more anticipated than that of the whispering gallery of St. Paul's; being a material of ringing hardness, in windy weather they send forth a sound which at night is heard over the city, of course particularly in the direction of the wind, and which is dreary in the extreme, and to those residing in the vicinity of the Minster Yard must be far from enlivening; the melancholy unmusical wail seems to proceed from some imprisoned ghost—the spirit of the departed chimes perhaps, and who as the storm drives more furiously through the bars of his cage, raises his voice to a howl which is heard above it. With a view to obviate this, a piece of stout quartering has been fixed upright in the middle of each opening, notched so as to halve the inner bearing of the louvres, since which the ghostly music has been less loud and less frequent, although not altogether put down; this, however, it is confidently expected will be accomplished. The 11th bell of the peal, which is described as being of a very fine mould, bears the following inscription:—"*Soli Deo Gloria. Anno Domini* MDCCCXXXVII. *Regina Victoria, Britanniarum Regina Septum. Archiepiscopatûs Edwardi Archiep. Ebor* MDCCCXXXVII. *Stephani Beckwith, Medicæ Doct. inter. Eboracenses Primarias Testamento Legavis. Cardley Ex. Georgia Mears, Londini. Fecit. Rud.,* 1844." The weights and dimensions of the several bells in the peal will be found detailed in Vol. II., page 364, of THE BUILDER; their entire weight, including the two small ones added to the old number, is 16 cwt. 2 qrs. and 18 lbs. more than that of the former peal. An amusing idea of the deafening din while up amongst them when in full peal may be formed from the fact, that the writer of this, on an occasion of his being there with some friends, endeavoured at the loudest possible pitch of his voice, while standing close to them, to make himself heard, without being at all audible. In the ringers' chamber is the following inscription engraved on a large brass plate, and which was rendered necessary by the name of Dr. Beckwith being omitted to be inscribed on each bell:—"This peal of twelve bells was given by the will of the late Stephen Beckwith, M.D., senior physician of this city, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and forty-three.

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|---|---|
| C. and G. Mears, Bell-Founders, London, July, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-four. | Barnard Price, Thomas Price, Farll James Copsie, Executors." |

The ringers' chamber is immediately under that containing the bells; under the ringers' is the one appropriated to the clock, which strikes the hours upon the tenor, and the quarters on one of the smaller bells. This clock, it is considered, would not be sufficiently strong for the great bell, which is to be placed in the north-west tower, and a new one of more powerful mechanism is accordingly proposed to be placed there in its stead. An account of "The Minster Bell" will be found in Vol. III., page 83, of THE BUILDER (the current year). In addition to the bells there mentioned, by way of comparison, we may state that although our "Big Peter" is unquestionably the greatest bell in this kingdom, he would play but a second fiddle amongst the bells of the continent, not to say any thing of Russia:—

St. Stephen's bell, Vienna, is stated to weigh upwards of 17 tons.

The people of Rouen estimate their largest at 16 tons.

Our great Tom of Oxford is 7½ tons, or perhaps rather more.

The great bell of Antwerp Cathedral, weighing about the same as this, is said to have taken sixteen men to ring it; from this we find, supposing the circumstances to be similar, that Peter would require the united strength of twenty-six men to bestir his metal; but this estimate probably far exceeds the truth, and much must depend upon the care and nicety exercised in the hanging.

The old Tom of Lincoln, mentioned in the paragraph referred to, having been cracked, was broken up on the 18th of June, 1834.

There may sometimes be great mistakes as to the weight of large bells: in a clock-house at Westminster hung a bell which was usually rung at the coronations and funerals of princes, and bearing this inscription:—

> King Edward made me
> Thirty thousand and three,*
> Take me down and weigh me
> And more you shall find me.

When it was taken down at the doom's-day of abbeys, it was found, even with the help of two more, not to weigh 20,000.

In further observance of Dr. Beckwith's will, a thorough restoration of the interior of the Chapter-house has been going on for the last six months, and which, when completed, will render this part of the Minster a perfection of architectural beauty of its kind. The masonry of the surrounding stalls has undergone a repair of the most perfect description, many of the canopies being in front entirely new, and the whole, including the carvings, reworked and made good. In this part of the masonry, before these operations were begun, the destructive effects of the use of iron cramps were most strikingly exemplified, many stones being shivered to pieces, the work thrown out of its proper bearings, the joints in every direction an inch or two in width, and the cramps themselves in such a state of decay, that had the Chapter continued to hold their meetings there, and this restoration not have come soon about, the lives of Dean, Canons, and Prebends would have been involved in one common danger by the impending masonry. In the restoration, cramps of iron, encased and brazed in copper, have been used where necessary, but wherever possible the front parts of the masonry have been dovetailed into that behind, and joggled together, and dowelled with slate plugs, so as to render foreign adjuncts unnecessary. In this stall-work, the most beautiful carvings were found wedded to the most clumsily-constructed masonry, such as the artisans of our day would be ashamed of. In the interior angles of the stalls, the Purbeck marble shafts, many of which were much decayed, and some entirely worn through by time, have been made good with new, and the whole highly-polished, presenting a fine contrast to the clean Huddlestone masonry, and setting off with increased effect the exquisitely-carved cups and pendants. Besides the usual process of polishing to which such work is subjected, these shafts received, in a hot state, a coating of some waxen mixture, part of which they imbibed, thus rendering their pores less pervious to the atmosphere, while it enhanced the brilliancy of their polish. On polishing the old shafts, they were found to be generally much superior in beauty to those obtained at the present day, being less confined to the dark grey tone, and presenting pleasing variegated patches, approaching a flesh colour.†

To accord with this part of the works, arrangements have been concluded with Mr. Willement, who executed the beautiful decorations in the vaulted ceiling of the Temple Church, for performing the like office for that of the Chapter-house, the symmetrical combination of which affords favourable scope for his ability. It has been determined also to lay the floor with Minton's encaustic tiles, which, when such reinstatements as are necessary in the beautiful glazing of the windows have been effected, will render the *coup d'œil* complete. On the stall-work and clustered shafts between the windows were plain traces of the masonry having formerly been decorated in party colours, and which is also apparent in the vestibule, but upon mature consideration it was judiciously resolved to confine this branch of art to the groined ceiling, thereby securing a relief which would not otherwise have been obtained. Preparations are in progress for heating the entire Minster with hot-water; four large slate cisterns are also about being prepared for the lantern-tower, as suggested by Mr. Smirke, and which will collect the water from the roof; they are to be placed in the corners, between the groined ceiling and the external roof, and will be three-sided

* lbs.

† A few months back it was accidentally discovered that the central or most projected shafts of the clustered piers in the north, and we think, the south transept, were of Purbeck marble, having suffered during some past restoration, in the 19th century style, the "plague of whitewash;" since the discovery has been made, the difference between them and the other shafts is quite perceptible, being smoother, and less dull in colour. It is to be hoped they will soon be allowed to stand forth in their native colours.

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